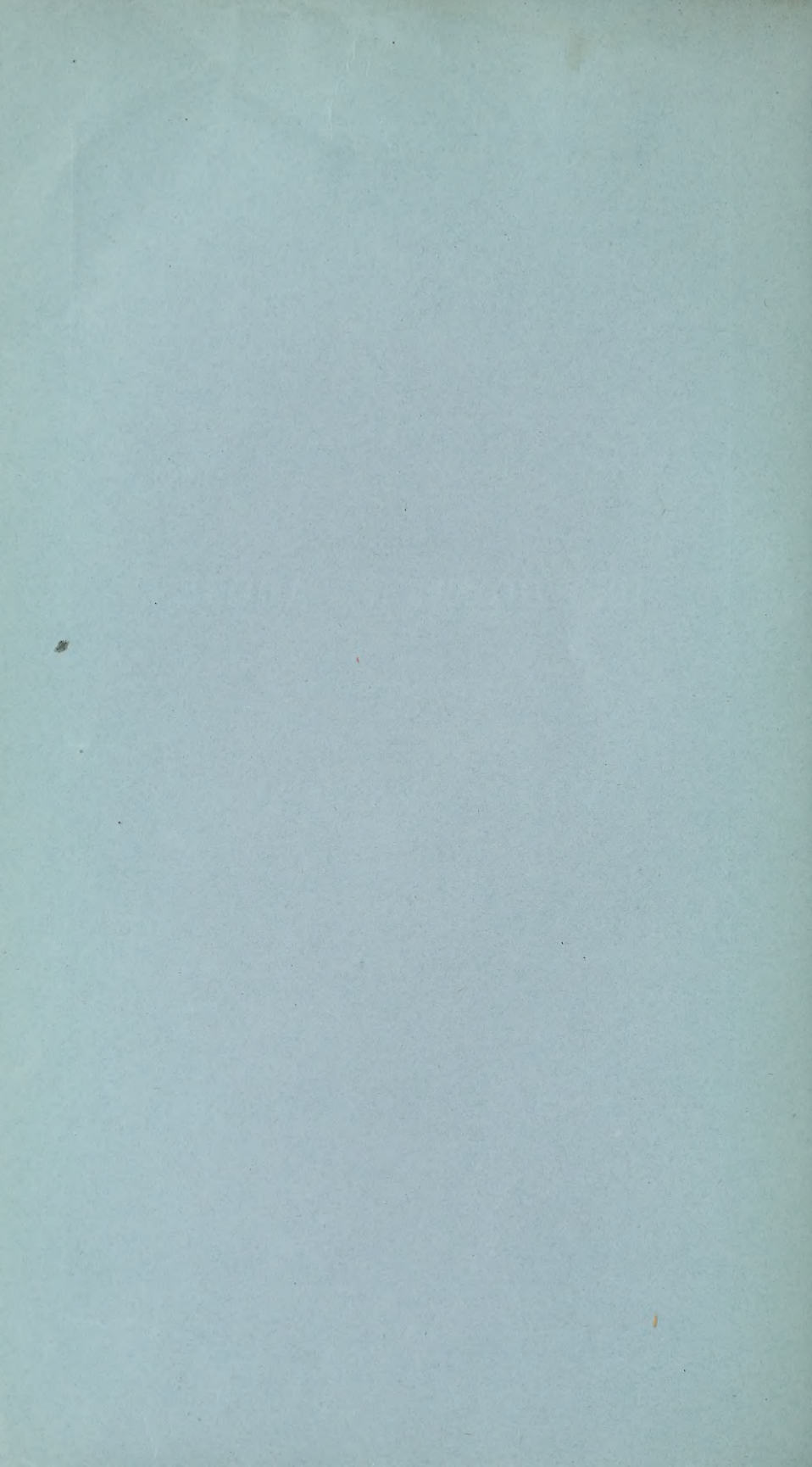


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MR. THOMPSON'S ADDRESS

AT THE FUNERAL OF

MISS ANN BELL.



ASLEEP IN JESUS.

AN

A D D R E S S

AT THE

FUNERAL OF MISS ANN BELL.

WHO DIED

SABBATH, MAY 2, 1858.

BY

A. C. THOMPSON,

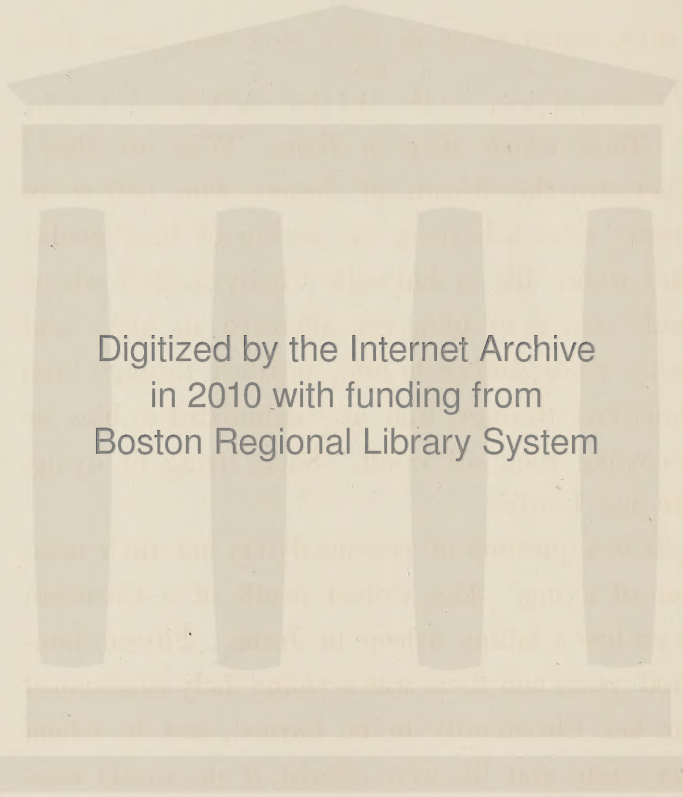
Pastor of the Eliot Church, Roxbury.

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“THEM WHICH SLEEP IN JESUS WILL GOD BRING WITH HIM.”

Them which sleep in Jesus. Who are they? They are the friends of Jesus; who believe in Jesus; who believe to the saving of their souls; they whose life is hid with Christ in God, whose souls cleave to him, are affianced to him; and being vitally united to him, justified through him, sanctified through him, are assimilated to him, he becoming their all in all. Such, living or dying, are the Lord's.

It is a question of persons dying, not their manner of dying. The violent death of a Christian is no less a falling asleep in Jesus. Fifteen hundred years ago there was a young lady condemned for her Christianity to be burned, and to whom her estate and life were offered, if she would worship idols, but who exclaimed, “Let money perish, and life vanish; Christ is better than all.” Amid the flames of martyrdom, or the billows of the ocean, one may fall asleep in Jesus equally, as

amidst the comforts and quiet of home. It was amid the shouts of a mob, and beneath a shower of stones, that Stephen fell asleep.

What is it to sleep in Jesus? What is it to fall asleep in Jesus? It is in faith and love to commit the soul to him, when departing this life. It is as a believer clothed with Christ's righteousness, leaving the body in the great dormitory of earth, and passing beyond the portal of the grave; it is bidding "good night" to earth, and hearing a "good morning" the other side. Death is just a transient dream to the saint in Christ; a dim, brief trance between time and eternity.

"Them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." There is an awaking. To the saint in Christ Jesus, death is the day-break of eternity. As when the patriarch awaked out of his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place; how dreadful is this place; this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven;" so exclaims the believer when he awakes in the great Bethel above. "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness." Weariness is gone, dreams are at an end. The Sun of Righteousness

rises upon the soul, never to set. To the departing believer, there is no death and no night—

“As sets the morning star, which goes
Not down behind the darken'd West,
Nor hides obscured among the tempests of the sky;
But melts away into the light of heaven.”

“Them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” There is to be an awaking, on the resurrection day; “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first.” What a dawn will that be! What elastic, beauteous, enduring forms will then be furnished to the saints in Christ! Christ gave a partial illustration of that scene when he said, “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.”

And does he not to-day enter this sanctuary, and looking at these remains, say, “She is not dead, but sleepeth?” What was his message to our sister last Sabbath morning? Was it not, “Come up hither?”

On the same day, two years ago, she publicly professed her faith in him, standing then where now sleep these silent remains. Her recorded

testimony was, that she had no merit of her own, and no shadow of hope except through the interposition of Christ; that the thought of him was sweet to her; that it was her desire others should come to him, and find the same blessings she had found; that the companionship of Christians was her choice; that she had no desire for frivolous amusements; that the Bible was the choicest of books to her; that daily prayer was her practice and her pleasure, and that whatever was good in her, she regarded as the fruit of the Holy Spirit's influence.

Her Christian character and course were without special positive mark,—unobtrusive, and unexceptionable. In her last sickness she had no raptures and no fears. Complete acquiescence in the will of God, and a quiet trust in the Lord Jesus, were the chief features of her almost silent sinking to the sleep here spoken of. The last time it was my privilege to see her, she spoke with an almost unearthly calmness, and yet with more than usual animation of a final residence elsewhere.

“Her home was far, O far away;
 The clear light in her eyes
 Had nought to do with earthly day;
 ’Twas kindled from the skies.”

Last Sabbath, as the first rays of a resurrection-daylight began to brighten the firmament, amidst the solemn stillness of that hallowed dawn, broken only by the sweet matins of May-birds, she awoke, as we believe, amidst the glories of New Jerusalem.

Mother of the deceased, “thy daughter is not dead, but sleepeth.”

Dear Children of her day-school; you whose minds, and hearts, and feet she had guided; you who had brought her sweet flowers and sweeter words,—your Instructor sleeps in Jesus. God grant you may all meet her yet in the school, in the home of heaven.

Young Ladies of the Bible class,—one of your number has now other associates, and a different Instructor. Has she found “the words of Jesus” untrue? These motionless lips move once more,—never again to move till at Christ’s advent she shall exclaim, “Rabboni!”—and the gentle, solemn words are, “Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.”

ASLEEP in Jesus ! blessed sleep !
 From which none ever wakes to weep !
 A calm and undisturbed repose,
 Unbroken by the last of foes !

Asleep in Jesus ! oh ! how sweet
 To be for such a slumber meet :
 With holy confidence to sing
 That death hath lost its venom'd sting !

Asleep in Jesus ! peaceful rest !
 Whose waking is supremely blest ;
 No fear—no wo, shall dim that hour,
 That manifests the Saviour's power.

Asleep in Jesus ! oh, for me
 May such a blissful refuge be :
 Securely shall my ashes lie,
 Waiting the summons from on high.

Asleep in Jesus ! far from thee
 Thy kindred and their graves may be ;
 But there is still a blessed sleep,
 From which none ever wakes to weep.

